

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A processor includes multiple protected operating modes. In at least one of the
5 protected operating modes, segmentation is disabled or partially disabled. In other words,
segment descriptor information may not affect the execution of an instruction specifying
the segment register storing the segment descriptor information. In other protected
operating modes, segmentation may not be disabled (e.g. segment descriptor information
does affect the execution of the instruction specifying the segment register storing the
10 segment descriptor information). However, segment load instructions may be performed
in any protected operating mode (including checking segment descriptors for exception
conditions during the segment load), which may allow a code sequence executing in one
of the protected operating modes in which segmentation is disabled to establish segments
in the segment registers for use by other code sequences executing in other protected
15 operating modes.